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26 August 1963

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CENTRAL

INTELLIGENCE

BULLETIN



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DAILY BRIEF

South Vietnam: [Several South Vietnamese officials, including army generals, are privately expressing concern over the ramifications of the crackdown on Buddhists.]

[They maintain that the army was tricked by Ngo Dinh Nhu into establishing martial law and that he thereafter used his own special forces and police to raid the pagodas without the army's advance knowledge. Some officers are alarmed that Nhu's virtual takeover may weaken South Vietnam's resistance to communism.]

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[Ambassador Lodge, however, reports that there is little hard evidence as yet that officers with military strength in Saigon itself are disaffected with Diem or Nhu.]

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India: The ministerial changes announced by Nehru on 24 August are intended to meet strong pressures for a "rejuvenation" of the Congress Party; effective power remains in the hands of the same key leaders.

The changes, which will probably take effect after Parliament adjourns, call for Home Minister Shastri, Finance Minister Desai, and Food Minister Patil to leave the cabinet. Shastri reportedly is to be named party president, while Desai will assume an equally influential position as chairman of the party's parliamentary board. Food Minister Patil is expected to concentrate on fund raising and personnel work. Chief ministers of the Indian states of Madras, Orissa, Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar will also relinquish their posts for party jobs.

The reassignment of responsibility probably will not immediately affect Nehru's own political position or upset the balance of power between Desai and Shastri, who are the leading contenders to succeed him.

The removal of the country's strongest leaders from the cabinet will cause serious problems in the administration of urgent development and defense programs, since effective replacements are likely to be difficult to find.

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